

**CHILD ABUSE OF OLIVER REFLECTED IN *OLIVER TWIST*
NOVEL BY CHARLES DICKEN (1838): A
PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVE**



**Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Getting Bachelor
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APPROVAL

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan bagaimana kekerasan terhadap anak yang digambarkan oleh Oliver dalam novel *Oliver Twist* (1838) karya Charles Dicken menggunakan perspektif psikoanalitik. Novel *Oliver Twist* (1838) dianalisis dalam dua aspek. Pertama didasarkan pada apa saja indikator kekerasan anak terhadap Oliver dalam novel menggunakan perspektif psikoanalitik, kedua didasarkan pada mengapa kekerasan terhadap anak pada Oliver secara khusus dibahas oleh Charles Dicken dalam novel. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif. Penelitian ini menggunakan dua sumber data, yang pertama adalah novel *Oliver Twist* (1838) karya Charles Dicken sebagai sumber utama. Sumber data kedua diambil dari sumber lain yang terkait dengan penelitian ini. Kedua jenis sumber data tersebut diperoleh melalui toko buku dan internet kemudian dianalisis menggunakan analisis deskriptif. Berdasarkan penelitian tersebut, peneliti menarik beberapa kesimpulan. Yang pertama didasarkan pada kekerasan terhadap anak yang tergambarkan dalam novel menggunakan perspektif psikoanalitik. Kedua, ada beberapa jenis kekerasan terhadap anak yang digambarkan dalam novel. Ketiga, adakah latar belakang penulis mengangkat kekerasan terhadap anak yang tercermin oleh Oliver sebagai topik utama dalam novel *Oliver Twist* (1838).

Kata Kunci: Kekerasan terhadap anak, psikoanalitik, Charles Dicken, *Oliver Twist*.

Abstract

This study aims to explain how child abuse is reflected by Oliver in the novel *Oliver Twist* (1838) by Charles Dicken using a psychoanalytic perspective. The novel *Oliver Twist* (1838) is analyzed in two aspects. First is based on what are indicators of child abuse of Oliver in the novel by using psychoanalytic perspective, second is based on why child abuse of Oliver specifically addressed by Charles Dicken in the novel. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. This study uses two sources of data, the first is the novel *Oliver Twist* (1838) by Charles Dicken as the main source. The second source of data is taken from another resource that is related to the study. The two types of sources are obtained through the book stores and the internet then analyzed by using descriptive analysis. Based on these studies, the researcher draws some conclusions. The first is based on child abuse reflected in the novel by using a psychoanalytic perspective. The second is there is some kind of child abuse which is depicted in the novel. The third is there some background of effect the author raised child abuse reflected by Oliver as the main topic in the novel *Oliver Twist* (1838).

Keywords: Child Abuse, Psychoanalytic perspective, Charles Dicken, *Oliver Twist*.

1. INTRODUCTION

Abuse is a crime committed to physical force resulting in the victim helpless (Weda, 1996: 108). The abuse can be physically, psychologically, sexually, and socially (Huraerah, 2007: 47). Sometimes abuse is received by children although in their ages they need peace and time to enjoy their childhood.

In *Oliver Twist* novel by Charles Dickens tells about child abuse. Child abuse needs to study because it is still found in many children, they work to live, and they can't get their happiness as a child and lost their childhood. Researchers want to show that abuse is the wrong action and tells that abuse is a problem for children in this study.

Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens is a novel that has the main character, his name is Oliver Twist. Oliver always gets a problem in his life, beginning from his mother dies after the birth of his child in a workhouse and then his father is unknown where. After that Oliver moves from the workhouse to London and works for John Dawkins, The Artful Dodger, John Dawkins tells to Oliver to come along Faqin, his servant. Faqin is the ringleader of a gang of criminals, every day Oliver always gets punishment and mistreatment for him, now Faqin has three servants to picking pockets, they are Oliver Twist, Charles Bates, and The Dodger. They usually pick an old gentleman's pocket and flee, someday when Oliver flees, he is arrested by police because of his offense. At the police station, the frightened boy was released by the testimony of the bookseller who knows the theft. After that Oliver is collapsed and collapses, and he has taken home by Mr. Brownlow, the victim of the crime. In Mr. Brownlow's home, Oliver considered like his son by Mr. Brownlow, Oliver gets foods and happiness there.

Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens is an interesting novel that easy to understand. Language use is simple and the storyline of *Oliver Twist* is nice because in the beginning, the writer tells about who is Oliver Twist, where he was coming from, what is his problem, and in the end, closed with happy ending. There are some reasons why the researcher is interested to analyze this novel. First, the topic of the novel is interesting. This novel told about child abuse experiencing by Oliver, and the researcher it still relate to what happen

nowadays. The second, this study can be beneficial for the student with the good moral values contained in this research that child abuse is need more be concerned nowadays, for parents or whoever.

From the explanation above the writer decided to analyze this novel by using the theory of psychological entitled **Child Abuse of Oliver Reflected in Oliver Twist by Charles Dicken (1838): a Psychoanalytic Perspective.**

2. METHOD

In analyzing the research, the researcher uses descriptive qualitative approach. Descriptive qualitative approach is the research obtained the data through library and the internet then analyzed using descriptive analysis. Firstly, the researcher reads the whole novel *Oliver Twist* (1838) then take some notes to relate to the issue. The second, the researcher is browsing the internet to get several information and articles related to the object of the study then identifying the problem and finding the data. The third, the researcher analyses the data using psychoanalytic approach

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The Characteristic Id, Ego, and Superego of Oliver in *Oliver Twist*

To know the psychological condition of Oliver Twist, the writer applies Id, Ego, and Superego that are based on the theory of psychoanalytic by Sigmund Freud. The psychoanalytic theory argues that human behavior is the result of the interactions among three parts of the mind; Id, Ego, and Superego. This theory known as Freud's structural theory of personality places great emphasis on the role of unconscious psychological conflicts in shaping behavior and personality. The balancing between Id, Ego, and Superego will build a good personality and behavior of humans. But the Id, Ego, and Superego of a person can vary according to his or her condition at the time. Usually, a person with a dominant superego will have better social skills because every act will always refer to the morals and values that exist in society. And people with dominant id will usually cause more conflicts in the society because he or she only follows his or her desires without

considering the morals and norms that exist in society. Personality and behavior are usually determined by one's ego, whether to follow Id or superego. So id, ego, and superego determine someone in making decision and action, it will form in shaping human personality and behavior.

Moreover, in analyzing the Id, Ego, and Superego the writer only focused on Oliver's character. It is caused Oliver is the main character of the story. Based on those, this chapter is divided into three main part, they are the Id of Oliver Twist, the Ego of Oliver Twist, and the Superego of Oliver Twist.

3.1.1 Description Character Id of Oliver

The id is the source of all psychic energy, so it is the main component of personality. The form of Id such as wish, motivation, and need occurs spontaneously. The examples are thirst, hunger, cool, sex, and the other experiences show presence a need. Oliver's character Id works when he felt hungry. It is described in chapter II pages 14 and 18 when Oliver felt hungry.

"... Hunger and recent ill-usage are great assistant if you want to cry; and Oliver cried very naturally indeed." (Ch. II, P. 14)

"... He had a wild, hungry eye; and they implicitly believed him. A council was held; lots were cast who should walk up to the master after supper that evening, and ask for more; and it fell to Oliver Twist." (Ch. II, P. 18)

3.1.2 Description Character Ego of Oliver

The ego is both conscious and unconscious for the conflict between instinctual pleasure and reality which takes place within it. The ego is located in the unconscious and depends on reality. Meaning to say, the ego is like a ladder between the needs of the id and the realities offered by the ego.

Oliver's ego depicted works in chapter 8 when he should make the decision of his life and what to do. It describes when Oliver is at the very edge of town, and it is eight in the morning. He's so afraid of being caught by the parish authorities or the Sowerberrys that he runs, dodging between

hedges, until noon. Oliver stops to rest by a milestone that says that he is seventy miles from London. Oliver remembers having heard about London from the older men at the workhouse and decides it's

"the very place for a homeless boy, who must die in the streets unless some one helped him" Ch.8, P.60

3.1.3 Description Character Superego of Oliver

The superego focuses on moral values from personality to society that we have been taught by our parents. The superego is partly unconscious, it issues a blind command, just the id blind desires, and produces feelings of guilt when its commands are disobeyed. It means the superego is the pitiful part of personality since the superego directs ego to base behavior on how the action can affect the whole of the community.

Oliver wants to go outside with the others. Of course, he doesn't know what they're up to. All he knows is Fagin seems to value hard work, Oliver still does not realize that Fagin and the boys are not making the stuff they took from the street they bring back, they are stealing it. When finally Fagin allows Oliver to go out with the Dodger and "Master Bates", Oliver still thinks they are going to be teaching how to make things. Oliver notices that the Dodger has a bad habit of pulling little kids' hats over their eyes and pushing them and that Charley keeps stealing apples from fruit vendors.

"... while Charley Bates exhibited some very loose notion concerning the rights of property, by pilfering divers apples and onions from the stalls at the kennel sides, and thrusting them into pockects which were so suprisingly capacious,..." Ch.10, P. 76

3.2 The Kind of Child Abuse Reflected in the Novel

According to Suharto (1997: 365-366) there are four kinds of child abuse, they are physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse and social abuse. In this part, the researcher will give some example for every type of child abuse suffered by Oliver in the novel.

3.2.1 Physical Abuse

According to Harisa (2012) psychal abuse is any act that cause damage or physical pain such as slapping, hitting, poking, twisting arms, stranglng,

kicking, threats with an object or weapon, and murder. Physical abuse is easy to be known because it usually has mark in child's body such as bruise, bloody, fracture and other hard effects.

According to explanation above the researcher found some example of physical abuse suffered by Oliver.

"The Master aimed a blow at Oliver's head with the ladle; pinioned him in his arm; and shrieked aloud for the beadle." Ch.2, P. 19.

The data above show Oliver experiencing physical abuse when the Master aimed a blow at Oliver's head with the ladle, pinioned him in his arm, and shrieked aloud for the beadle.

3.2.2 Psychological Abuse

According Harisa (2012) psychological violence includes the behaviour that intended to intimidate and persecute, threaten or misuse of authority, limiting out of the house, supervise, take the rights of child, spoil the child, isolate, verbal aggression and constant humiliation. This type of violence is not easy to recognize by others but can be felt by the victim.

According to explanation above the researcher found some example of psychological abuse suffered by Oliver.

"...when the gentleman asked him if wanted to be apprenticed, that he should like it very much indeed; both of which injunctions Oliver promised to obey: the rather as Mr. Bumble threw in a gentle hint, that if he failed in either particular, there was no telling what would be done to him." Ch.3, P.25

The data above show Oliver experiencing psychological abuse when Mr. Bumble threaten Oliver with a gentle hint, that if Oliver failed in either particular, there was no telling what would be done to Oliver.

3.2.3 Sexual Abuse

According to Huraerah (2007: 71) sexual abuse is one of sexual intercourse practices by mean of violence, contrary through the doctrine, values of religion and the applicable laws. Resna and Darmawan in Huraerah (2007: 71-72) also divide sexual violence into three parts, they are rape, incest and exploitation.

From explanation above the researcher only found exploitation suffered by Oliver.

“But now that he was enveloped in the old calico robes which had grown yellow in the same service, he was badged and ticketed, and fell into his place at once – a parish child – the orphan of a workhouse – the humble, half-starved drudge – to be cuffed and buffeted through the world – despised by all, and pitied by none.” Ch.1, P.8

The data above show Oliver experiencing sexual abuse when he was a baby and the people around him decide his fate to fall into the orphan of a workhouse, and he would suffer and pitied by none.

3.2.4 Social Abuse

According to Huraerah (2007: 48-49) the violence that included social abuse one of them are neglected. Neglect is attitude and behaviors that does not give proper attention towards the growth process of children, for example ostracized, exiled from the family or not given proper education and health.

From explanation above the researcher found some neglect that suffered by Oliver.

“Oliver, being left to himself in the undertaker’s shop, set the lamp down on a workman’s bench and gazed timidly about him with a feeling of awe and dread, which many people a good deal older than he will be at no loss to understand.” Ch.5, P.36-37

The data above show Oliver experiencing one of the social abuse that was neglect when Oliver being left to himself in the undertaker’s shop.

3.3 The Revelation Why Child Abuse Specifically Addressed by The Author in *Oliver Twist*

Dickens tried to relive his lost childhood through the numerous child characters whom he made to live in his novels. Dickens not only had immense sympathy for children but also felt great concern about the state of affairs in his contemporary society. Child abuse was inter-related as the former is the consequence of the latter. Society is largely responsible for the condition of its members. In the nineteenth century industrialization and progress, the conflict between money and love eventually took its toll on the

welfare of the children. The situation was grim, particularly for those who were orphan, poor, destitute and downtrodden. Charles Dickens expressed his disapproval and concern for the existing social norms. He emphasized the irresponsibility towards children through his works. He attracted the public to the wretched and pathetic condition of the poor, the orphans and members the lower strata of the nineteenth century society.

Charles Dickens exposed numerous social drawbacks in his novels. *Oliver Twist* is regarded as a Victorian Era text book of Child Abuse. As the novel progresses the drawbacks, of the workhouse and the underworld of the nineteenth century Victorian society, are exposed. The child protagonist experienced an extremely harsh life under very difficult conditions until he finally found a benefactor. Right from the time of his birth Oliver Twist encountered starvation, suppression, corruption and violence. Child abuse and neglect were recognized in the 1960's and 1970's. However, it has obviously been an issue for centuries and Dickens certainly described all the categories of abuse, together with many predisposing features and many sequelae. Clearly, what might have been acceptable in Victorian England society was not acceptable to Dickens, who expresses his disapproval of much that he described. In terms of standards in Britain in the year 2001, many of the caretaker practices described in *Oliver Twist* constitute child abuse.

"But now that he was enveloped in the old calico robes which had grown yellow in the same service, he was badged and ticketed, and fell into place at once – a parish child – the orphan of a workhouse – the humble, half – starved drudge – to be cuffed and buffeted through the world – despised by all, and pitied by none." Ch.1, P.8.

Oliver Twist draws the attention of its reader to various social evils prevalent in the nineteenth century contemporary society. The ineffective poor law, child labour, pathetic condition of the workhouses and recruitment of small children by the underworld have been dealt with unsparing honesty. The workhouse provide no solace to the already disturbed mind of *Oliver*

Twist as the torture inflicted upon him were of no less degree than what he had been enduring since his birth.

“The gruel disappeared; the boys whispered each other, and winked at Oliver; while his next neighbors nudged him. Child as he was, he was desperate with hunger, and reckless with misery. He rose from the table; and advancing to the master, basin and spoon in hand, said: somewhat alarmed at his own temerity : ‘Please, sir, I want some more.’” Ch.2, P.18.

Oliver’s solitude and agony began with the first breath he drew. Neglect and abject squalor, compounded with starvation and regular beating made his life miserable. The question that lay ahead was not of succeeding or rising but of survival. Dickens strove to show that the struggle of Oliver is not just of survival but the desire to overcome the fear of being completely cut off from the outer world. Dickens through the novel *Oliver Twist* calls upon the attention of it’s reader to various social evils prevalent in the contemporary society. Dickens was not only the first great urban novelist in England, but also one of the most important social commentators who used fiction effectively to criticize economic, social, and moral abuses in the Victorian era.

4. CLOSING

Psychoanalytic is a theory proposed by Sigmund Freud. It is of psychoanalytic study which has two fundamental assumptions. The psychoanalytic approach gives the understanding to us from point of view of our unconscious and early childhood experience. The content of our unconscious can give us a neurosis. Freud’s concept explained that personality is divided into three parts, that is the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious. The conscious mind is what one is aware of at any particular moment like someone’s present perception, memories, thoughts, fantasies, etc. The preconscious mind is what closely works with the conscious but can be made conscious early. And the last is the unconscious mind which is the source of man’s motivations such as desires for sex, food, and so on (Ahmed, 2012: 61). Based on Freudian’s Personality Concept, personality made up of three major system: Id (as the biological

aspect), Ego (as the psychological aspect), and Superego (as the sociological aspect).

Child abuse is bad treatment by their parent or other people who must save them. Child abuse can be physical, sexual abuse, or exploitation. Suharto in Huraerah (2007: 57) classified abuse into physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, and social abuse. The four of those types will be explained as follow: 1) Physical child abuse is a treatment as mistreating, beating, and another treatment with or without using tool that can injure the child. 2) Psychological child abuse is a treatment as saying profanity words, showing a book, picture or pornography movie to the child. 3) Sexual child abuse is a treatment as pre-treatment sexual contact between children and older people, it can be word, touch and visual picture or treatment of direct sexual contact between children and older people, it can be incest, ravishment and sexual exploitation also child trafficking. 4) Social child abuse is a treatment as neglect and exploitation of children.

The researcher found four kind of child abuse in the novel there are physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse and social abuse. For sexual abuse the researcher focused in human trafficking experiencing by Oliver and for social abuse the researcher focused in neglect experiencing by Oliver. The researcher also give example for every type of child abuse experiencing by Oliver.

4.1 Physical abuse.

"The Master aimed a blow at Oliver's head with the ladle; pinioned him in his arm; and shrieked aloud for the beadle." Ch.2, P. 19.

The data above show Oliver experiencing physical abuse when the Master aimed a blow at Oliver's head with the ladle, pinioned him in his arm, and shrieked aloud for the beadle.

4.2 Psychological abuse.

"'Now, Oliver, my dear, come to the gentleman.' As Mr. Bumble said this, he put on a grim and threatening look, and added, in a low voice, 'Mind what I told you, you young rascal!'" Ch.3, P.26

The data above show Oliver experiencing psychological abuse when Mr. Bumble threaten Oliver and intimidate Oliver within a low voice tell Oliver to mind what Mr. Bumble told to Oliver.

4.3 Sexual abuse.

“In other words, five pounds and Oliver Twist were offered to any man or woman who wanted an apprentice to any trade, business, or calling.” Ch.2, P.19

The data above show Oliver experiencing sexual abuse when Oliver be the subject of human trafficking, again. At cost five pounds to any man or woman who wanted him to any trade, business, or calling.

4.4 Social abuse.

“He was alone in a strange place; and we all know how chilled and desolate the best of us will sometimes feel in such a situation. The boy had no friends to care for, or to care for him.” Ch.5, P.37

The data above show Oliver experiencing one of the social abuse that was neglect when Oliver was alone in a strange place and no one care for him.

Throughout the book, Dickens gives observations on children and parenting, both by society and by natural and substitute parents. He observes and describes many categories of child abuse, together with risk factors which modern research has identified in abusing parents. The researcher only focused on human trafficking on sexual abuse and neglect on social abuse, the researcher tough human trafficking and neglect should be more concerned according to child abuse nowadays.

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